

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of:

PAUL LONGWORTH et al.

Group Art Unit: 3616

Examiner: F. M. Fleming

Serial No.: 10/710,951

Filed: August 13, 2004

For: VEHICLE SUSPENSION WITH IMPROVED RADIUS ARM
TO AXLE ATTACHMENT

Attorney Docket No.: 81105586/FMC1794PUS

RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION

Mail Stop Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In response to the Office Action mailed March 7, 2007, please consider the following remarks regarding the above-identified application.

Remarks

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the claims of the application in view of the following remarks. Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 1-10 are allowed and that claims 13, 14 and 16 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Claims 11, 12 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Tandy, Jr. et al. (USPN 5,651,561).


Claim 11 claims the combination, including a pair of bearings that are secured to a connection structure that is secured to an axle tube. The bushings are disposed on the same fore and aft side of the central axis of the axle and are vertically spaced relative to each other. The benefit of this vertically spaced arrangement is explained with reference to Figure 5 in paragraph 32 of the specification. Figure 5 is a plot comparing a bushing arrangement having the disclosed vertical orientation to an equivalent bushing wherein the bushings are arranged in a fore and aft relationship with one bushing in front of the axle and the other bushing being located behind the axle. The cited Tandy, Jr. reference discloses neither arrangement. The vertical arrangement of the bushings showed an increased roll stiffness for the given bushing rate compared to equivalent fore/aft bushings. The increase in roll stiffness in the example shown in the plot of Figure 5 indicates that for a roll angle of 6°, the roll torque is approximately 14,000 N-n compared to fore/aft bushings that have a roll torque of less than 12,000 N-n.

The Examiner's reliance on Tandy, Jr. is misplaced in that the Tandy, Jr. reference does not disclose bushings that are vertically spaced relative to each other. In the Tandy patent, the radius arm bushing 20 is secured to radius arm 12 on the left side of the vehicle, while radius arm bushing 28 is secured to the radius arm 22 on the right side of the vehicle (col. 3, lns. 35-51). The Tandy patent also states that the radius arms 12 and 22 are virtually identical, except that one is made for the right side of the vehicle while the other is made for the left side of the vehicle (col. 5, lns. 38-44). The only figure that shows both bushing 20 and bushing 28 is Figure 1, which is a top plan view of the twin I-beam suspension system. Figure 1 shows that the two bushings are transversely spaced apart and on different radius arms, not vertically spaced as claimed in claim 1. Since the two radius arms are

virtually identical, they are necessarily at the same vertical height and are not vertically spaced relative to each other. It is respectfully submitted that claim 11 is not anticipated by the Tandy, Jr. reference and the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejection of claims 11, 12 and 15. The Examiner is requested to telephone Applicants' undersigned attorney if it would advance the prosecution of this case.

It is respectfully submitted that the claims in the application are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this case to issue.

Respectfully submitted,
PAUL LONGWORTH et al.

By 
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